Copper

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by TigerPrawn

Summary

Nearly two years on the run and Will wonders if the domestic and familiar routine can ever change. Ever be more...

They had been on the run for close to two years and despite the constant moving, or perhaps because of it, they had settled into a sort of domestic comfort with one another. As far as two serial killers could. Moving every few weeks meant that they were the only constant in each others lives - as towns, countries and identities changed, they remained the same. Nothing changed. Nothing of significance ever changed between them.

“Are you alright Will?”

Hannibal’s voice was warm and soothing in the chilly breeze. The flea market was open air and Will found himself blowing into his cold hands more than once, wondering if he should buy some gloves whilst he was here. For now his focus was drawn to a table packed with jewelry, that even Hannibal’s question didn’t draw him from.

“Hmm?”

Hannibal chuckled and Will's breath caught as he felt the man move close behind him, something he seemed to be ever more hyper-aware of. Or maybe Hannibal was just doing it more often? Which made sense he supposed, they practically acted like a married couple and he had never felt closer to anyone in his life - including his wife. He had never known himself better than when he was with Hannibal… or so he thought.

In the beginning it had been easy, much more so than he would ever have believed. Once they recovered and hit the road, it had felt like a weight had lifted. The heavy need throughout his life to be what was expected and necessary was no longer there. With Hannibal he could be himself. It was more than easy - it was fun.

Over time, with each new move, it became comfortable and strangely domestic. Will didn't question it or fight it. He just let their new lives unfold with every new identity and town. They were contractors mostly, that was their cover - they set up jobs ahead of many moves and he couldn't deny there had been something enjoyable about seeing Hannibal working manual jobs in plaid. Travelling businessmen, travelling workmen, partners of that sort. But with each move Will wondered if that would change. When it would change.

Could it change?

He looked down and knew he trembled a little with Hannibal so close. A large part of him wanted Hannibal to step closer, to slide his arms around his waist and nestle his face against his neck.

The thought didn't even shock him. It wasn't exactly the first time he had thought such a thing, wished it. He had thought it many times since they had run… and a few before then - after his conversation with Bedelia.

Is Hannibal in love with me?

The words echoed in his head as he watched the glint of the winter sun on various items on the table.

How many more years did he have to wait before something changed between them? Before Hannibal made a move? Kissed him on one of those occasions he seemed about to do so; take hold of his hand when the opportunity presented; change their aliases to a different type of partner - lovers? Husbands?

Because he would wait. He wasn't going anywhere as far as Hannibal was concerned. No matter where they ended up, that would still be the constant - them, together. He told himself over and over that he didn't need more. He didn't need to hear Hannibal confess his love himself. He didn't need to say those words back. He didn't need a physical confirmation of it. He didn't need them to be more than they were because he would always stay regardless. He didn't need anything to change between them any more or faster than they had.

Except on the days that he did.

The days where he didn't want to even look at Hannibal because it was too hard that it was still unacknowledged. The days where he wanted to just snap at the man as they moved

casually around a rented apartment, around each other. The days when it was so unbearably domestic that he thought his heart might break with sadness and happiness at once.

Will looked down again at the rings.

They weren't gold, weren't anything remarkable or precious. They looked to be copper, or something so tarnished as to give that affect.

Almost two years and Hannibal had made no move, no blatant acknowledgement. Nothing beyond the easy familiarity between them that marked them as close. So close.

The sun moved out from behind a cloud and the glint off of the rings was almost blinding. Will was blinded. Had been blinded. The cloud moved again and the rings remained - dull, solid, old and familiar.

He turned quickly before Hannibal could move away, snaking an arm easily around his waist and pulling him forward. He clocked the momentarily shift of Hannibal's expression in and out of surprise before a smile grew easily on his lips.

Will held Hannibal tight to his side and pointed down at the rings. "How about these honey? I figured it was time I make an honest man of you?"

His heart was racing and yet the words felt so right. His own smile grew as Hannibal melted into his side and wrapped his own arm around Will's waist.

"Yes, well you have made me wait rather longer than I had hoped." Hannibal replied, his voice tinkling with amusement and a million other deeper emotions.

Will looked at him then and saw the absolute adoration on his face that he had seen there every day for so very long but had never let sink in. It suddenly struck him that it wasn't Hannibal that had been holding them back.

"Yeah." Will replied, his throat dry and tight. "Sorry about that. I just realised I wasn't waiting for you at all."

Hannibal's smile softened. "No, you always had me. But I never wanted to push."

Will chuckled. "Yes, manipulation isn't your strong suit."

Hannibal tried to hide the grin that brought at his own expense. One that spoke of how truly hopeless they both were.

They had turned a little inwards so that they were facing each other, their breaths fogging the space between them. Both smiling sort of shy smiles through which Hannibal replied -

"I would have waited forever."

Will shook his head and chuckled.

"That's because we're both damn idiots."

It was such a simple thing then to lean in and press his lips against Hannibal's that he wondered once again as he finally tasted the man, how he had never done this before.

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